

HS2 Phase 1 Central Section, Archaeological Works

Trial Trench Evaluation at North of Field Cottage, Southam Cutting Site Code 1C18NFCAR Summary Report

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CODE 1 - ACCEPTED

1 Summary

- 1.1.1 Archaeological recording commissioned by Fusion was undertaken between January and April 2018 ahead of the construction of Phase One of the new High Speed Two (HS2) railway network. The site was 0.69ha in extent, comprising a single arable field c. 500m to the south-west of Southam, Warwickshire, centred at NGR 440904 260876. The land will be used for ecological mitigation works including the construction of mitigation ponds, hibernacula and reptile basking banks as well as woodland and grassland planting. Two trenches were opened in January 2018 targeting the location of the ponds: Trench 9 measured 13.5m by 7.5m, and Trench 10 measured 16.5m by 10m. In April 2018 an additional phase of works was required in the area of the proposed relocation of one of the ponds and comprised a single area (Trench 11) measuring 22.5m by 15.8m. The Warwickshire HER records that Roman pottery and coins have been previously found on the site and geophysical survey on behalf of HS2 prior to trenching identified two phases of well-defined settlement enclosures.
- 1.1.2 Trench 9 and Trench 11 contained a NW-SE orientated ditch that produced Roman pottery. Many of these small sherds were undiagnostic, although a single piece dated to the early Roman period. A furrow was also found in Trench 9, two furrows were discovered in Trench 10 and two in Trench 11. These are very likely to have been part of a ridge and furrow field system dating to the medieval or post-medieval period. The furrows were orientated WNW-ESE and contained 18th-19th century pottery, suggesting they had gone out of use by this date.
- 1.1.3 The evaluation uncovered a single ditch containing Roman pottery confirming the presence of a Roman (possible farm/rural settlement) site. The extent and character of this site is apparent on the geophysical survey and is notable in regard to the very little Roman activity has previously been recorded in the vicinity of the site. The presence of furrows confirms other indications that the site was under arable cultivation in the medieval and/or post-medieval period.